

# Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGandK

Warm greetings to all on the auspicious occasion of Navroz. May this festival bring joy, happiness and prosperity to everyone. Navroz Mubarak!

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## Met Predicts 2-Day Wet Spell From Today



MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

**SRINAGAR:** As the day temperature has gone up in J&K parts, the weatherman here has predicted two-day wet spell in Jammu and Kashmir from today (March 21), saying that light to moderate rains and snow is expected at many places. A fresh Western Disturbance is affecting Jammu and Kashmir •P-06

## JKBOSE Shocker... 11th Standard Question Paper Distributed To 12th-Class Students

RIYAZ BHAT

**SRINAGAR:** In a bizarre twist, the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Wednesday distributed Physical Education question papers of 11th standard to 12th standard candidates. Hundreds of 12th-standard candidates were left to lurch who had sleepless nights to prepare for the annual regular •P-06

## Elections In J&K Will Happen Before SC Deadline: Amit Shah



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** Elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be conducted before September 30, Union Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday. Speaking at CNN-News18 Rising India Summit 2024 in New Delhi, Shah said, "Voting in Jammu and Kashmir will happen before the Supreme Court of India's deadline of September 30." On December 11, 2023, the apex court directed the Election Commission of India (ECI) to conduct elections in Jammu and Kashmir by September 30, 2024. "We direct that steps shall be taken to conduct elections for the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir by September 30, 2024, and statehood shall be restored as soon as possible," the bench said. The last Assembly polls in J&K were held in 2014. The People's Democratic Party (PDP) formed a coalition government with the BJP. But in 2018, the BJP pulled out of the alliance and the government collapsed. Following that, the Assembly was dissolved and the Governor's Rule came into place. On August 5, 2019, the Centre abrogated Article 370 and the erstwhile state was bifurcated into the Union Territories (UTs) of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Slamming the opposition, the Union Home Minister, at the summit, also •P-06

**WE DIRECT THAT STEPS SHALL BE TAKEN TO CONDUCT elections for the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir by September 30, 2024, and statehood shall be restored as soon as possible."**

## Nomination Process Begins For First Phase Of Lok Sabha Polls



Rep Image

**NEW DELHI:** The nomination process for 102 parliamentary constituencies spread across 21 states and Union territories, where polling would be held in the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections on April 19, began Wednesday with the issuance of a notification. In the first phase, polling will be held in Arunachal Pradesh (2 seats), Assam (5), Bihar (4), Chhattisgarh (1), Madhya Pradesh (6), Maharashtra (5), Manipur (2), Meghalaya (2), Mizoram (1), Nagaland (1), Rajasthan (12), Sikkim (1), Tamil Nadu (39), Tripura (1), Uttar Pradesh (8), Uttarakhand (5), West Bengal (3), Andaman and Nicobar (1), Jammu and Kashmir (1), Lakshadweep (1) and Puducherry (1). The last date for filing nomination papers is March 27. However, due to a festival, March 28 is the last date for filing nominations for the Lok Sabha seats in Bihar going to polls in the first phase. Voting in four out of 40 seats in Bihar will be held in the first phase. Nomination papers will be scrutinised on March 28. For Bihar, it would be done on March 30. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is March 20 while for Bihar, it is April 2. The elections for the 18th Lok Sabha will begin on April 19 followed by subsequent phases on April 26, May 7, May 13, May 20, May 25 and June 1. The counting of votes is on June 4. In Itanagar, the state election office issued separate gazette notifications for holding elections to 60 assembly constituencies and two Lok Sabha seats in Arunachal Pradesh. The ruling BJP won both Lok Sabha seats in the 2019 elections. In the assembly, the BJP bagged 41 seats, JD(U) won seven •P-06

## Remove Unauthorised Pol Advts

## EC Asks Authorities To Comply With Orders

**NEW DELHI:** Cracking the whip, the Election Commission on Wednesday asked state governments to take down all unauthorised political advertisements from government, public and private properties and send a compliance report in the next 24 hours. In a letter to the Union Cabinet Secretary and the chief secretaries of all states and union territories, the EC said that despite its letter issued on March 16 when the model code of conduct for the Lok Sabha elections •P-06

## Pre-COVID Fares Northern Railway Slashes Ticket Prices For Kashmir



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In a major relief to train commuters, Northern Railways has reduced ticket fares to pre-COVID times in the Kashmir valley, officials said on Wednesday. A top railway official said that railways reinstated Second Class Ordinary Fares on passenger trains in Kashmir. "The fare charges have been dropped by nearly 40-50%, reverting to pre-COVID levels," he said, adding that previously, the ticket fare was Rs 35 from Sadura station to Srinagar, now it has been reduced to Rs 15. He further said •P-06

## NGT Issues Notices On 'Deteriorating Conditions' Of Wetlands, Water Bodies

AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** The National Green Tribunal has issued notices to the authorities, including the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee, over the alleged deteriorating conditions of wetlands and water bodies. The green tribunal was hearing a matter in which it had taken suo motu (on its own) cognisance of a news report highlighting the "worsening condition" of wetlands and water bodies in the Union Territory. The report said wetlands and water bodies in the Union Territory are in decline due to both natural and man-made causes such as rising temperatures, unchecked deposition of millions of tons of sediments annually, encroachment and waste discharge. It also claimed pollution in water bodies such as Dal, Wular, Anchar and Manasbal lakes and wetlands, including Haigam Rakh in the Jhelum •P-06

## HIV Infected Persons Govt Appoints Ombudsman To Keep Check On Discrimination

MUBASHIR ALAM

**SRINAGAR:** In a significant move, the Jammu & Kashmir Government has appointed an ombudsman to whom people infected with HIV can complain about discrimination faced by them. The Health & Medical Education Department has appointed Sham Lal Lalhal, retired district and sessions judge, as ombudsman to address complaints of discrimination under the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control) Act 2017. According to a notification issued by the department, Sham Lal Lalhal has been appointed as ombudsman for a period of three years or till he attains the age of 70, whichever is earlier. The appointment has been made under the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control) Act 2017. Under the law, every state and UT shall •P-06

## Welcome Spring Blooming Almond Alcove In Srinagar Draws Visitors In Large Numbers



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

**SRINAGAR:** As the chill of winter gradually gives way to the gentle warmth of spring, the iconic 'Badamwari Garden' here has come alive with the breathtaking beauty of almond bloom, much to the delight of locals who eagerly anticipate this annual spectacle. "For us Kashmiris, the blooming of almond trees in Badamwari Garden is a cherished and beautiful view that marks the beginning of spring," said Aazan, a resident of Zafran Colony Srinagar. "It's a sight that fills our hearts with joy and reminds us of the resilience of our land." Rahul, one of the visitors from Mumbai, said that the enchanting beauty of Badamwari Garden's almond bloom, and the arrival of spring is like seeing heaven with your naked eyes. The vibrant hues of pink and white blossoms against the backdrop of snow-capped mountains evoke a sense of wonder and reverence among the people. The beauty of Badamwari Garden during almond bloom is unparalleled. Sahil, a local said, adding that it is like stepping into a fairytale, where every tree is adorned with delicate flowers. Families are gathered amidst the •P-06

## Demand For Kashmiri Apples Soar This Ramadan



MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

**SRINAGAR:** With Ramadan in progress, demand for Kashmiri apples has soared across India. Since the beginning of Ramadan, growers have started shipping apples, which were stored in cold storages, to the rest of India. As per the growers the apples currently have a good demand across India as the holy month of Ramadan is in progress. "CA stored apples have a good demand right now. Right now Kashmiri apples are being shipped to the leading fruit markets of India. We still have a huge quantity of apple still stored in cold chain facilities ready to be shipped to the various markets of India," President North Kashmir •P-06

### MOVIES Schedule

Thursday 21 March

**YODHA (HINDI)**  
11:15AM, 06:20PM (U/A)

**SHAITAAN (HINDI)**  
11:45AM, 02:45PM, 06:00PM (U/A)

**DUNE PART TWO (ENGLISH)**  
WITH ENG SUBTITLES  
02:15PM (U/A)

**KUNG FU PANDA 4**  
(ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) (U)  
03:00PM, 05:30PM HINDI 12:45PM

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# DEO Pulwama chairs meeting with Political Parties

Urges all political parties to abide by the electoral code of conduct

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**PULWAMA:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom chaired a meeting with representatives of various political parties at the District Election Office premises, here.

The meeting was aimed to foster dialogue and adherence to MCC guidelines and cooperation among political stakeholders in the lead-up to the upcoming elections.

The DEO emphasized the importance of ensuring a fair, transparent and inclusive electoral process that upholds the democratic principles.

During the meeting, key topics including Model Code of Conduct, Role of Political Parties in different stages of electoral process and adherence to



Guidelines and Directives of ECI were discussed. The political parties were encouraged to actively engage through presentations by State Level Master Trainer.

Dr. Basharat reiterated the Election Commission's commitment to conducting free and fair elections and urged all political parties to abide by the electoral code of conduct. He emphasized

the need for mutual respect, cooperation and adherence to democratic norms throughout the electoral process.

The representatives from the political parties expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue and pledged their commitment for ensuring smooth electoral process in Pulwama district.

The DEO concluded the meeting by reaffirming the Election Commission's dedication to facilitating a transparent and credible electoral process. He urged all political parties to work collaboratively towards achieving the common goal of upholding the integrity of the democratic process.

The meeting was attended by Nodal Officer MCC (ADC), AROs and Dy DEO.

## LOK SABHA ELECTIONS Training imparted to Sector Officers in Kupwara



**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**KUPWARA:** The District Election Officer Kupwara organized a training session for the Sector Officers in the conference Hall of DC Office Complex, here.

The training was imparted by Nodal Officer Elections/ National Level Master Trainer (NLMT), Sameer Jan.

NLMT briefed the Sector Officers thoroughly about the responsibilities during the forthcoming election and urged them to put forth every effort to

make Lok Sabha elections smooth and successful.

The Sector Officers were acquainted with essential skills and knowledge to ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process.

Participants actively engaged in interactive sessions and practical demonstrations to enhance their understanding and proficiency in handling diverse scenarios.

Training session was attended by the Deputy District Election Officer (Dy. DEO), Hamidullah Mir, NT Election, Sector Officers (Election).

## DEO Kulgam chairs meeting of enforcement agencies



**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**KULGAM:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan Wednesday chaired a meeting of enforcement agencies at the mini-secretariat, here.

During the meeting the DEO called for strict implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and urged all for strict adherence to all guidelines of Election Commission of India.

DEO directed that FST

and SST teams shall work in coordinated manner as per the guidelines of ECI.

It is important to mention here that a dedicated district level control room has been established here to ensure seamless redressal of public complaints and ensure smooth conduct of elections.

The meeting was attended by the AROs, Dy-DEO, Nodal Officers, ETO, Manager Lead Bank, Assistant Controller Drugs, Dy-SP Hq and other concerned officers.

## LOK SABHA ELECTIONS ADDC Ganderbal holds meeting with Flying Squad teams



**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**GANDERBAL:** The Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani Wednesday held a meeting with the flying squads, designated magistrates, Videographers and other officers in his office chamber, here.

The ADC impressed upon the officers to ensure the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) is strictly followed and violations if any are promptly reported to the concerned quarters.

He said that all designated teams have to properly follow the SOPs issued by Election Commission

of India and also ensure public safety and convenience.

ADDC asked all teams to submit their daily activity reports well in time and also be prepared to reach the spot instantly in case of any complaint received.

He also said that magisterial powers delegated to all the heads of the flying squads are aimed to empower them for proper implementation of law and order.

On the occasion, the ADC briefed the videographers accompanying the FSTs about their role and responsibility and asked them to cover each activity sensibly and with utmost care.

## LOK SABHA ELECTIONS Election staff imparted training in Poll Expense Monitoring in Kupwara



**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**KUPWARA:** In order to explain the role and responsibility of various teams constituted to keep an eye on poll expenditure and the model code of conduct (MCC) during the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the District Administration Kupwara Tuesday held a special training workshop for polling staff to ensure vigil of poll expenditure.

Members of the Expenditure Monitoring Team, Assistant Expenditure Observers, Video Surveillance Teams, and Video Viewing Teams participated in the training session. Chaining the session,

Nodal Officer Elections/NLMT, Sameer Jan said that all team members should be acquainted with the methodology to calculate the poll expenditure.

He said that the teams had been given the responsibility of monitoring election expenditure of candidates and parties and it was necessary to impart them training about the methods to do their duty.

On the occasion, team members were informed about the role and responsibilities entrusted upon them by the Election Commission of India to ensure proper implementation of guidelines issued by the Commission.

**SVEEP PROGRAM**

## Manasbal Lake echoes with Voter Awareness Slogans

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**GANDERBAL:** An awareness program under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative reverberated across Manasbal Lake, Ganderbal, as boatmen and locals gathered to participate in the event.

The collaborative effort between the Nodal Officer SVEEP Ganderbal, the Chief Executive Officer of Manasbal Development Authority and the Block Development Officer Safapora aimed to educate the boatmen community about their voting rights and the importance of active participation in the electoral process.

With a significant turnout of Boatmen with their beautiful Shikaras placed



meticulously on the crystal clear waters of the Lake, the program made strides in raising awareness about

voter registration, voting procedures, and the significance of exercising their franchise.

District Level Master Trainers played a pivotal role in delivering informative sessions and engaging discussions, ensuring that the message of voter awareness resonated effectively with the boatmen community.

Despite the logistical challenges inherent in reaching out to a community with specific occupations and schedules, the program succeeded in making a meaningful impact in instilling voter awareness among the boatmen of Manasbal Ganderbal.

This concerted effort underscores the commitment of local authorities to promote democratic participation and civic engagement across diverse segments of society.

**SVEEP**

## Voters Awareness program organized at Kaman Post

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**BARAMULLA:** The Sub Division Administration in Uri orchestrated a dynamic Voters Awareness program at Kaman Post Uri, as part of the ongoing Systematic Voter Education Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative.

The event, aimed at fostering electoral literacy and encouraging robust participation in the democratic process, witnessed a commendable turnout and active engagement from various stakeholders.

Program was presided over by the Sub Divisional Magistrate Uri, Javid Ahmad Rather. The program saw the enthusiastic participation of Additional Nodal Officer SVEEP, Vice



Principal GDC Uri, SDPO Uri, AEROs, Principals, Zonal Education Officers, BDO Uri, Supervisors, BLOs, school principals and teachers, local residents, and students from diverse educational backgrounds.

The event featured a diverse array of interactive activities, including skits, cultural performances, debates, speeches, paint-

ing competitions, and slogan writing contests. These engaging sessions captivated the audience, fostering a spirit of civic responsibility and democratic participation.

During his address, SDM Uri underscored the pivotal role of electoral literacy in shaping informed citizenry and emphasized the significance of active participation in the elec-

toral process, particularly with the Lok Sabha 2024 elections on the horizon. He urged all eligible voters, especially first-time voters, to exercise their franchise responsibly and contribute to the democratic fabric of the nation.

The involvement of Booth Level Officers (BLOs) was instrumental in disseminating crucial information about the electoral process and empowering attendees with knowledge about their voting rights and responsibilities.

In recognition of the participants' dedication and enthusiasm, participation certificates were distributed by SDM Uri, in presence of Additional Nodal Officer SVEEP.

## Orientation program on School Safety, Security concludes in B'la

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

**BARAMULLA:** In a significant step towards improving school safety and security, a two-day orientation program organized by the School Education Department, Baramulla concluded Wednesday.

During the programme, 40 teachers from different government schools across 18 zones in Baramulla District underwent training as master trainers, who will subsequently train about 1800 teachers as Safety Councilors and First Responders in their zones.

The programme was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, and was attended by the Chief Education Officer Baramulla, Balbir Singh Raina, along with teachers from various schools across the district.

The training featured a specialized team from State Disaster Response Fund, Health, and Red Cross, who demonstrated safety preparedness strategies during emergencies to the participating teachers.

The training also encompassed informative sessions led by experts on a range of topics concerning school safety and security. These included discussions on child safety measures, cybercrimes, insights into the POCSO Act and other key aspects to ensure school safety and security.

Speaking during the program, the DC emphasized the need to raise awareness among students and all stakeholders about the importance of school safety and to create school-wide safety plans.

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir DIRECTORATE OF SCHOOL EDUCATION KASHMIR

Sabia Jan  
Teacher, GMS Qaimoh, Kulgam.

No: DSEK/Estt/III/B-Trs/MZ/91/021/1214-17

Dated: 19/03/2024

**FINAL NOTICE**

Whereas, you availed Child Care leave for one month w.e.f, 24/02/2020 but after expiry of leave instead of resuming your duties, you remained un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties w.e.f 24/03/2020; and

Whereas, you were given enough opportunities from time to time through Show Cause Notices dated: 15/06/2020, 04/10/2020 (through print media) and on 31/12/2020 to resume your duties by the Drawing Disbursing Officer concerned, but you repeatedly failed to do so, however your reply of the notice dated: 31/12/2020, reveals that you had proceeded abroad without obtaining proper station leave permission/sanction of leave from the competent authority; and

Whereas, you were also served with the show cause notices by this office vide dated: 02/12/2022, 28/04/2022 and on 01/10/2022, wherein you were again provided an opportunity to explain the reasons as to why the action shall not be initiated against you for remaining un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties, however you reply to the show cause notices but was again found un-satisfactory and un-substantial; and

Whereas, in terms of circular instructions issued by the Finance Department under No. A/46(2017)-I-862 dated: 21/02/2019, "When a State Govt, employee who intends to visit foreign country on private affairs during the period of leave prior permission of the competent authority to leave the station is required"; and

Whereas, you proceeded abroad without sanction of leave/station leave permission from the competent authority, as such remained un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties which attracts action as warranted under Article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume I) of 1956, which reads as under:-

**'Absence without leave or after the end of leave involves loss of appointment.'**  
Whereas, the issue was placed before the Designated Committee in its various meetings and latest by 08/04/2022, where it was recommended that "Final Show Cause Notice be served"; and

Whereas, a Final Show Cause Notice was issued vide this office No. DSEK/Estt/III/B-Trs/MZ/91/021/8775 dated:- 20/06/2023, in response to which you submitted your willingness to join and accordingly the matter was placed before Designated Committee in its meeting held on 17/10/2023 and the said committee recommended as under:-

**"Allowed to join/resume her duties within 10 days. Notice be issued accordingly."**

Whereas, in terms of the decision of the Designated Committee, you were again provided an opportunity to join your duties within 10 days, vide this office communication Dated:- 21/11/2023, which you failed to do within the stipulated time and submitted an application Dated:-20.02.2024, seeking yet another opportunity to resume duties; and

Whereas, the case was again placed before Designated Committee and the Committee in its meeting held on 11.03.2024, decided as under:-

**"Last and final opportunity be given to subject to join at Directorate physically within 15 (fifteen) days."**

Now, therefore, pursuant to the decision of the Designated Committee, a last and final opportunity is granted to you for joining at this Directorate physically within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of issuance of this Notice, failing which action under Article-128 of J&K CSR (Vol-I) shall be initiated against you for remaining un-authorizedly absent from your legitimate duties w.e.f 24/03/2020 and for proceeding outside the country without prior permission of the Competent authority.

DIPK-18163-23  
DT: 20/03/2024

Sd/-  
Director,  
School Education Kashmir

# PM Modi, LG, DGP, others greet people on Navroz

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jammu and Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Director General of Police (DGP) and political leaders greeted people on the auspicious occasion of Navroz.

"Navroz Mubarak! On this blessed day, I wish for everyone's joy and wellbeing. May the coming year be filled with success, growth and enhance the bond of unity in our society," Narendra Modi wrote on X.

"Warm greetings to all

on the auspicious occasion of Navroz. May this festival bring joy, happiness and prosperity to everyone. Navroz Mubarak!," Office of J&K LG.

Director General of Police R.R. Swain has extended greetings to the people of Jammu Kashmir, particularly members of Shia community, families of Police Parivar and other security forces on the auspicious occasion of Navroz.

In his message, the DGP has hoped that Navroz will bring happiness, prosperity and progress to the people of Jammu and

Kashmir, families of martyrs and police personnel. The DGP said that the beginning of a new year brings with it a sense of fresh possibilities. It gives us a chance to renew our resolution of commitment to peace.

He has prayed for peace and prosperity for Jammu and Kashmir.

National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Vice President Omar Abdullah have extended warm greetings to people on the auspicious eve of Navroz e Aalam.

In their greetings message, Dr Farooq and Omar

Abdullah highlighted the region's rich legacy and inheritance of brotherhood and amity. They expressed hope that the day will herald peace, prosperity and progress in J&K.

Meanwhile, NC General Secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar, Additional General Secretary Dr Sheikh Mustafa Kamal, Treasurer Shammil Oberoi, PP Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq, party leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi have also extended warm greetings go people on Navroz e Aalam—(KNO)

## AZAD- BUKHARI BONHOMIE

# NC ready for polls, history repeating itself, says Omar Abdullah

ALI ASAD

**SRINAGAR:** In the midst of burgeoning talks surrounding the formation of a new alliance in Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference (NC) Vice President Omar Abdullah reaffirmed his party's readiness for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, expressing a firm stance against any potential opposition coalition, whether deemed as B-team, C-team, or D-team.

Addressing the brewing political developments, Abdullah stated, "This is not the first time that the people of Jammu and Kashmir will see that everyone comes together to defeat the National Conference... This time also whoever has to meet, whether it is the B-team, C-team, or D-team,



they can meet... We are ready for this election."

He added that the similar situation occurred in 1977 when the entire political spectrum of Jammu and Kashmir united against NC founder Sheikh Abdullah. However, said Omar, "the victory was ours then and the victory will be ours now. We have fought militancy, boycott and at present the

dispensation at the centre is doing every bid to defeat us. But we will sail through," Omar told reporters.

The statement comes amidst discussions between various political entities, including Altaf Bukhari's Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) and Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), regarding a potential pre-poll alliance in the region. While JKAP has signaled openness to collaborate with like-minded parties for the betterment of Jammu and Kashmir, DPAP has also hinted at exploring alliance prospects, awaiting a decision from Chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Speaking on the prospects of alliance formations, Mohammad Rafi Mir, the general secretary of JKAP,

emphasized the party's commitment to engaging with parties aligned with the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. While JKAP has excluded any immediate alliance with the BJP due to ideological differences, it remains open to future collaboration.

Similarly, DPAP's chief spokesperson, Salman Nimaji, indicated ongoing discussions with like-minded parties, hinting at ideological resonance with the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference.

Earlier, Omar Abdullah had raised concerns regarding the government's readiness to facilitate the Election Commission in conducting simultaneous elections across states, particularly questioning the logistics of security arrangements—(KNO)

# Rohmoo Pulwama residents demand fire service station



JAHANGEER GANAIE

**PULWAMA:** The residents of Rohmoo area in Rajpora hamlet of South Kashmir's Pulwama district here have demanded a fire service station in their locality.

The residents of the area said that there are around 20-25 villages around Rohmoo, having a population in thousands but the area is yet to get a basic facility of fire service station.

The residents said that the nearest fire station for them is at Pulwama, which is around 10 KM from the town and at the time of any fire incident, they have to wait for hours for the fire tenders to reach the spot.

"By the time the fire service vehicle reaches Rohmoo and its adjacent areas, property worth lakhs gets damaged as it takes around one hour for fire tenders to reach the spot," Qayoom Khan, a local social activist said.

He said that the people of Rohmoo had approached successive governments for setting up a fire service station at Rohmoo, but to no avail.

Mudasir Ahmad, another local resident said that fire incidents are increasing and there is a dire need for a fire service station in the area that will cater to around one dozen adjacent villages.

He said locals have been continuously raising this issue at every platform but there is no positive response from the government as of now, adding that hundreds of villages are dependent on fire service station Pulwama and it is not possible for them to cater hundreds of villages at some time fire incidents can take place at multiple locations simultaneously.

The residents said that during recent years they had lost property worth crores due to the lack of a fire service station in their area, adding that even last year, some fire incidents have taken place in the area, which could have been controlled on time, had there been fire service stations.

They urged the higher ups to look into the matter and set up a fire service station in the Rohmoo area so that locals could have a sigh of relief—(KNO)

# Two weeks on, Zirpora residents reel under darkness

RAJA SYED RATHER

**GANDERBAL:** The residents of Gohipora Zirpora Kullian in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district are reeling under darkness for the past two weeks now as the transformer allotted to them in the locality has developed a technical snag.

The locals said that they have been without electricity for the past two weeks after the transformer got damaged.

"We are facing immense

hardships due to the technical snag of transformer feeding the locality," said Ab Ahad Raina, a local.

A delegation from the locality said that the PDD department is pushing them to the wall. In case the transformer is not repaired, we will hit the streets to protest against the government, the local said.

"We appeal to Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal and Chief Engineer KPDCI to intervene into the matter," locals said—(KNO)

# Man arrested with 4 hand grenades in Kupwara

AGENCIES

**KUPWARA:** Army on Wednesday said to have apprehended a man with arms and ammunition including four grenades in Khurhama area of northern Kashmir's Kupwara.

Indian Army's Chinara Corps posted on X, "Based on specific intelligence inputs, a Joint Search

Operation was launched by #IndianArmy & @JmuKmrPolice at Khurhama, Kupwara today."

The spokesperson said, one suspected individual has been apprehended along with the recovery of 04xHand Grenades and other war-like stores.

"Interrogation by JKP is in progress," the post reads—(KNO)

## WORLD ORAL HEALTH DAY

# Maintain oral hygiene for healthy lifestyle, advise doctors

JAHANGEER GANAIE

**SRINAGAR:** In light of World Oral Health Day, doctors in Kashmir have urged the people to prioritise oral hygiene for a healthy lifestyle, saying poor oral health can lead to conditions like Periodontitis.

Doctors highlighted the often-overlooked aspect of oral and dental health in Jammu & Kashmir, saying many people only seek dental check-ups when faced with complex issues.

"It is essential for people to undergo regular oro-dental check-ups every six months. Unfortunately, patients often delay seeking dental care until they experience severe toothache and facial swelling," remarked Dr Manzoor, a dentist from south Kashmir.

He said an unhealthy mouth not only impacts general health but also has a severe impact on people's emotional, social, mental and overall physical well-being.

He explained, "Like other parts of the body,

the mouth harbours germs, which, if left unchecked, can lead to infections such as tooth decay and gum disease. The mouth is the entry to the organs that allow breathing, called the respiratory tract. So, sometimes germs in the mouth can lead to disease throughout the body. That is why there is a need to maintain oral hygiene. Proper oral care, including daily brushing and flossing, is crucial to maintaining oral hygiene and preventing these conditions."

Good oral care, the doctor said, includes daily brushing and flossing. Without good oral hygiene, germs can reach levels that might lead to infections, such as tooth decay and gum disease, he said.

Dr Manzoor said certain medicines can lower the flow of spit called saliva. "Those medicines include decongestants, antihistamines, painkillers, water pills and antidepressants. Poor oral hygiene can contribute to various health issues, including endocarditis, cardiovascular disease, pregnancy com-



plications, pneumonia, and more," he said, adding that certain health conditions also might affect oral health, including diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

Similarly, Dr Shah Nawaz said that pathogenic bacteria responsible for dental infections can spread via the bloodstream, potentially causing infections in vital organs. He said Periodontitis, a disease affecting the supporting tissues of teeth, can lead to chronic inflammation and pose risks for heart problems, diabetes complications, COVID-19 complications, and other health issues.

"Harmful bacteria and their byproducts can travel through the bloodstream, causing direct damage to different organs or triggering inflammation throughout the body," he said.

He explained that the primary cause of gum disease is bacterial infection, which, if not addressed, can progress to Periodontitis, leading to the deterioration of the tooth's supporting structures.

Dr Shah Nawaz stressed the importance of addressing gum disease promptly to mitigate its potential adverse effects on both oral and overall health. He called for regular dental check-ups and proactive oral hygiene practices.

The doctors cautioned against self-medicating for tooth infections. They also said tobacco and smoking have detrimental effects on oral health and urged people to prioritize oral hygiene for a healthy lifestyle.

To maintain oral health, doctors recommend brushing teeth at least twice a day for two minutes each time, cleaning between teeth, consuming a healthy diet low in sugary foods and drinks, replacing toothbrushes every three months, and scheduling dental check-ups at least once a year—(KNO)

# Govt constitutes committees for implementation of NUDM

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir government has constituted the Union Territory High Powered Steering Committee and Union Territory Level Implementation Committee for implementation of the National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM) in J&K.

As per the order, Chief Secretary J&K will be the Chairman of High Powered Steering Committee while Commissioner Secretary Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) will be Chairperson of implementing committee.

The other members of the committee include Principal Secretary to the Government, Finance Department, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Information Technology Department, Commissioner, JMC/SMC, Vice Chairman, JDA/SDA, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu/Kashmir, Special Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (or their representative) and Informatics Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Nodal Officer (NUDM) J&K will be member secretary of the committee.

The Committee can co-opt any other member(s), as may be deemed necessary and terms of reference of the committee will be to meet once every six months to provide overall guidance, to provide decisions on inter-departmental coordination issues, to provide/

the rank of the Additional Secretary), Joint Director (Planning), Housing & Urban Development Department, Director, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (or their representative), additional secretary (law), housing and urban development department and Team



review availability of funds and to review the progress, provide feedback and guidance for implementation of the National Urban Digital Mission.

The members of UT level implementation committee will be Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Information Technology Department, Commissioner, JMC/SMC, Vice Chairman, JDA/SDA, Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu/Kashmir, Special Secretary to the Government, Housing & Urban Development Department, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (or their representative) and Informatics Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Nodal Officer (NUDM) J&K will be member secretary of the committee.

# NIT Srinagar to host 2 day National Conference on RASE-2024

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The National Conference on Role of Academic-driven Startups in Developing Economy of J&K (RASE-2024) will be hosted by NIT Srinagar from 29-30th June this year.

The conference will be held in association with prestigious institutions including the Department of Holistic Education, Vidya Bharti, Punjab.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A Ravinder Nath released a brochure of the (RASE-2024). It was attended by Dr. Thakur SKR, Sci/Engr-SF and Director, DHE & VBTR, eminent educationists Vijay Nadda and Dshraj Sharma, Dr. Saad Parvez, Head, IIEDC, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Dr. H S Pali, Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Rout and Shahid Abbas Mir, CEO- ITBI Greenovator, Incubation Foundation, NIT Srinagar.

In his keynote address, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath said this innovative conference is expected to bridge between academia and industry. "The conference will serve as a dynamic platform for students, researchers, and entrepreneurs, facilitating discussions on various aspects of startup culture, spanning from ideation to execution. It will offer valuable insights into the chal-

lenges and opportunities present within the startup ecosystem," he said.

Prof. Nath said the primary goal of this conference is to nurture a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship among the institute's community, including students, faculty, and local educational institutions.

"It will also act as a bridge between academia and industries, with eminent innovators from across the country sharing their experiences to inspire and guide attendees," Director NIT Srinagar added.

Dr. Saad Parvez, Organizing Secretary of RASE-2024 and Head of IIEDC, expressed that this conference aims to bring together expertise from various institutions to offer a thorough workshop covering different aspects of innovation and startup development.

He mentioned that the summit will feature local innovators and entrepreneurs alongside renowned speakers and industry experts from academia and the corporate sector.

"We will conduct talks and interactive sessions covering topics like generating ideas, researching markets, creating business models, exploring funding options, understanding legal aspects, and more," Dr. Saad said.

He said participants

will actively engage in hands-on activities, group discussions, and workshops to enhance practical learning and skills. Budding entrepreneurs will have the chance to pitch their startup ideas to a panel of judges comprising industry experts and investors. They will receive constructive feedback and guidance to refine their ideas and strategies.

Dr. Saad said that this conference will offer plenty of networking opportunities, allowing participants to connect with peers, mentors, and industry professionals. This environment will foster collaboration and open doors for potential partnerships," he said.

Dr. Thakur SKR, who is a Scientist/Engineer at SF and also serves as the Director of DHE & VBTR, said that this event will offer valuable insights and learning opportunities.

"This conference will be bringing together key stakeholders to discuss and shape the future of academic-driven startups and economic development in Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

It is pertinent to mention here that NIT Srinagar is going to host the 3rd conference of RASE Conferences Series after NIT Jalandhar and NIT Kurukshetra.

# Man found dead in Sopore, family alleges murder

WARIS FAYAZ

**SOPORE:** A family here in north Kashmir's Sopore alleged murder of their beloved son after his body was recovered under mysterious conditions from the orchards while the Police have started investigation into the matter.

An official said that a body has been recovered under mysterious conditions from Duroo orchards, and was subsequently taken to Sub District Hospital, Sopore.

Following the legal-medico formalities, the body was handed over to the family for the last rites, officials said, adding that the investigations related to the incident are going on in full swing.

The deceased was identified as Mushtaq Ahmed Mir son of Ghulam Rasool Mir of Duroo Sopore.

Mir, who has left behind five children, three daughters and two sons, went missing in the evening hours and subsequently police were informed following which the search operation was launched, said the deceased's brother Mohammed Rafi.

Those who killed him are not humans but beasts

and they should be taken to task, he said.

While thanking the relentless efforts of Police especially SDPO Sopore Sarfaraz Ahmed, SHO Sopore Nissar Ahmed and DO Warpora Bilal Rashid, Mir said that they left no stone unturned to trace his brother, however, he hoped that police will bring the murderers to task.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SP) Sopore, Divya D (IPS) while speaking to the reporters said that they received a missing complaint from family and instantly multiple search teams were formed led by SDPO Sopore, SHO Sopore and DO Warpora.

The searches were followed whole night and the body was recovered this morning near the deceased's home, she said, adding that the deceased had multiple head injuries.

"During the course of investigations, two suspects were picked up for questioning and are currently under custody," SP said, adding that "we didn't find any terror angle in this case but it seems more a personal one during preliminary investigations. We are on it and investigations are going on in full

# Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

## Unprofessional Journalism

There is a whole crowd of social media journalists in South Asia who present themselves as an alternative to big media houses. Most of them have half-baked knowledge of journalistic ethics and the basic knowledge. A good majority of them would have little idea about the basic terms like headline, byline, Editorial, banner headline, reporter, PTC, trial balloon, and anchor. However, they buy the cheapest microphone available online and take to the streets first with a bit of vox populi which slowly metamorphoses into an aggressive diatribe on social issues. These untrained journalists in South Asia are creating a kind of pungent street journalism that is ripped off all decency and is mostly an avoidable noise than journalism. Gone are the days when in Kashmir one had to really slog it hard in the Yuva Vani section meant for greenhorn artists, presenters, and prospective news presenters. It was a set of recorded programs professionally orchestrated by the program executives and oftentimes the same had to be recorded scores of times for perfection. This hardship would make young artists into thorough professionals. Sometimes one had to work for seven to ten years in the same Yuva Vani before he could see the face of a LIVE microphone in the general service of All India Radio (AIR). A small left-handed remark or an unprofessional act in the general service and one would be taken off the roster for many weeks as a punishment. It is through these carefully devised training schedules that we were able to produce actors, presenters, and journalists who then got worldwide fame. All the major video or radio journalists in Kashmir have gone through this tough training schedule in the 90s and the first decade of the 21st century. The government must organize a training program for these social media journalists. It can be a small capsule course organized by the Department of Information or through MERC of Kashmir University. Small duration program making them aware of what is admissible on air and what is not. This will go a long way in at least knowing their boundaries. Unbridled these pseudo-journalists can wreak havoc with the social fabric of Kashmir. The government needs to take strict action against some of the serious allegations of female harassment on air by some of these half-baked journalists. The law of the land must prevail.

## Paris Agreement

# Relevance, Prospect And Future Challenges



DR RAJKUMAR SINGH

The Paris Agreement is a landmark international accord that was adopted by nearly every nation in 2015 to address climate change and its negative impacts. Prior to the Paris Agreement, the most notable international treaty on climate change was the Kyoto Protocol, which set legally binding emission reduction targets for developed countries. In line, the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen (2009) aimed to create a successor to the Kyoto Protocol but resulted in a non-binding agreement that was considered a failure by many because it lacked legal force and clear objectives. In the circumstances, the Paris Agreement 2015 was negotiated and adopted on December 12, 2015, to keep this century's global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

In this conference each country was determined, to plan, and regulate report on the contribution it undertakes to mitigate global warming, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Under it, it was also provided that on every five years, a 'global stocktake' will assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and to inform further individual actions by Parties. As per law, the Agreement needed at least 55 countries representing at least 55% of global emissions to ratify it in order to enter into force. This threshold was achieved on October 5, 2016, and the Agreement officially entered into force on November 4, 2016.

In addition, the key issues include financial support for climate action in developing countries, rules for measuring and reporting emissions, and increasing ambition over time, however, for a while, its prospect was marred when the United States, originally a signatory, announced its intention to withdraw from the Agreement in 2017 under President Donald Trump, but officially re-joined under President Joe Biden in 2021. The Paris Agreement represents a significant step forward in the global fight against climate change, establishing a framework for international cooperation, but its success depends on the continued commitment and increased ambition of its signatory countries.

### Aims and objects

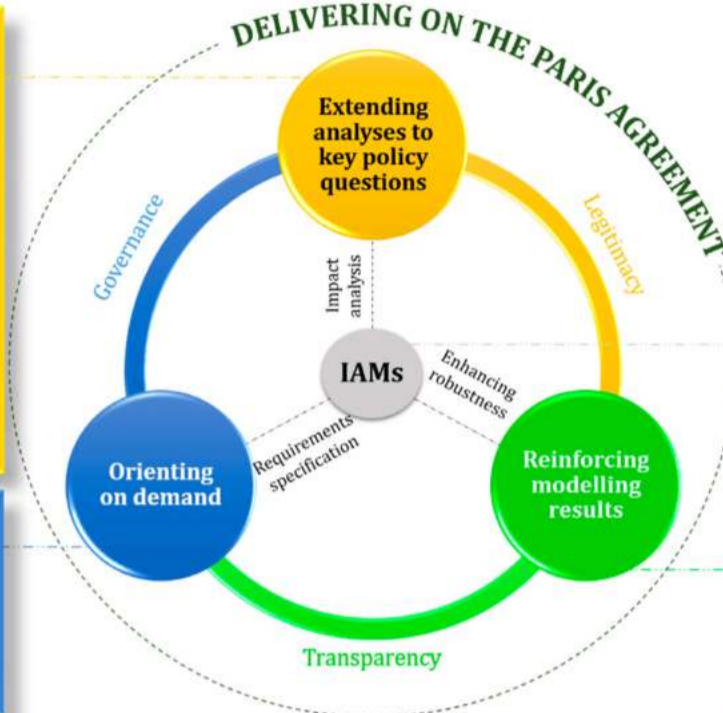
The Paris Agreement, adopted in December 2015 during the COP 21 UN climate change conference in Paris, has several core objectives aimed at combating climate change and adapting to its effect: a. Limit Global Temperature Rise: The primary aim is to keep the global average

**Delving into:**

- Different cooperation/coordination regimes
- Gaps between NDCs and actual objectives; increasing ambition
- Alignment of NDC analysis with SDGs
- Emission sinks
- Intra-country, distributional NDC implications
- Ancillary benefits and avoided impacts from climate action
- Synergies and conflicts with other policies and initiatives
- Equity across countries

**Engaging all actors:**

- Policymakers
- Private industry
- Governments
- IPCC & Researchers
- NGOs
- Unions, Associations
- Other institutions
- Public



**Ensembles of quantitative systems models:**

- General Equilibrium
- Macroeconomic
- Partial Equilibrium
- Energy System

**All geographic scales:**

- National
- Regional
- Global

**Meaningful model inter-comparisons**

**Informing modelling processes:**

- Multiple-criteria group decision making
- System mapping and systems of innovation
- Fuzzy cognitive maps

**Assessing uncertainty:**

- Portfolio theory
- Regret analysis
- Life cycle analysis

temperature increase in this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. This goal is intended to significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.

### Increase Ability to Adapt to Climate Change

The Agreement seeks to increase the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change, and to foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production. This includes providing continued and enhanced international support for adaptation to developing countries. c. Make Finance Flows Consistent with Low GHG Emissions and Climate-Resilient Development: The Agreement aims to make finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. Developed countries are to provide financial resources to assist developing countries with both mitigation and adaptation in continuation of their existing obligations under the UNFCCC.

### Key Mechanisms: Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

Each Party to the Agreement must prepare, communicate, and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve. Parties will pursue domestic mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions. Global Stocktake: Every five years, a global stocktake will be conducted to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and its long-term goals. This process will inform Parties in updating and enhancing their actions and support, as well as in enhancing international

cooperation for climate action. e. Long-term Goals: Peaking of Greenhouse Gas Emissions: The Agreement aims for a peaking of global greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible, recognizing that this will take longer for developing countries. Net Zero Emissions: Parties aim to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.

### Achievements and prospect

The Paris Agreement, since its adoption in 2015, has marked a significant step in the global response to climate change: a. Achievements Global Participation: One of the key achievements of the Paris Agreement is its near-universal membership, with 197 countries having signed the agreement and 190 countries having ratified it as of now, showcasing global commitment to tackling climate change. Increased Climate Ambition: The Agreement has encouraged countries to set more ambitious national climate goals over time. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are central to this, requiring countries to progress and set higher targets every five years. Mobilization of Finance: The Paris Agreement has played a role in mobilizing finance for climate action. Developed countries have committed to mobilizing \$100 billion annually by 2020 to support climate action in developing countries, a goal which is being worked towards and expected to continue beyond 2020.

### Enhanced Transparency and Reporting

The Agreement established a robust transparency framework to build mutual trust and confidence and to promote effective implementation, requiring countries

to report on their emissions and efforts regularly. b. Future Challenges and Opportunities Raising Ambition: Turning NDCs and other commitments into action remains a significant challenge. Effective implementation requires domestic policy changes, mobilization of finance, and technological innovation. Climate Finance: The promised \$100 billion per year in climate finance from developed to developing countries needs to be fully realized and scaled up. Ensuring access to finance and technology transfer for vulnerable countries is crucial. Adaptation and Loss & Damage: Strengthening efforts in adaptation and addressing loss and damage caused by climate impacts is critical, especially for the most vulnerable countries. Future negotiations will need to focus more on these aspects. Global Stocktakes: The first global stocktake will take place in 2023, which will be a critical moment to assess collective progress and inform the next round of NDCs.

This will be an opportunity to increase global ambition. Looking Ahead The future of the Paris Agreement hinges on increased ambition, accelerated action, and enhanced cooperation among all countries. With the impacts of climate change becoming increasingly evident, there is a growing urgency to address the climate crisis. The upcoming COP meetings will be crucial in addressing these challenges, setting the stage for enhanced global climate action. The success of the Paris Agreement will ultimately be measured by the collective ability of the world to limit global warming and transition to a sustainable, low-carbon future.

Author is a youth motivator and former Head of the University Department of Political Science, B.N. Mandal University,

## Peace Movement's Two Roles

# Reducing Distress In A Big Way And Saving The Planet



BHARAT DOGRA

Violence causes massive distress in our daily life, as seen in children being beaten and abused, women suffering physical, sexual, and emotional assault, school and workplace aggression, bullying, fighting, youth gangs, attacks, and homicide as also violence against the self as seen in suicides, suicide attempts, and self-harm. Not just the victims but also several of their near and dear ones experience enormous distress which often lasts for a long time. If all these aspects of violence in daily life are taken together, these together cause significant distress to almost one-half of humanity in any given year.

In addition, there is the violence of wider conflicts and wars. These also kill a large number of people, the average of the last century being around one million in a year, but many times more are seriously injured and disabled, displaced, or perish in famines and diseases related to war. These wars are getting increasingly dangerous and can destroy most life on earth if even a small percentage of all accumulated weapons of mass destruction are used.



The role of the peace movement is to minimize the possibility of all these destructions and adverse impacts.

On the one hand it seeks to minimize the possibilities of various forms of violence including self-violence in daily life. So many efforts are already being made for this, but there may be problems in them. To give one example, to reduce possibilities of various forms of self-violence, there may be over-reliance on certain medicines whose benefits may also be exaggerated for economic gain. The role of the peace movement may be to provide a more evidence-based approach and also to provide a wider, holistic understanding of the social situation, helping to understand root causes

of violence and also ways of reducing this.

If the peace movement is successful in this, then this will attract a large number of people who should be involved in various important peace activities such as inter-faith harmony and ensuring peace in communities at various levels. This mobilization of a large number of people for peace in daily life also provides increasing opportunities for mobilizing people on world peace, disarmament and minimizing the possibilities of war and conflict. Peace movements of various countries can cooperate with each other all the time to take this forward at world level, ultimately establishing the peace movement as a very important force for creating a

better and safer world. One of the most important objectives should be to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction, to reduce all weapons, minimize the military industrial complex and ultimately to create a future without wars. If there is peace and stability, chances of cooperation for resolving serious environmental problems increase significantly. Hence both by eliminating weapons of mass destruction as well as by facilitating cooperation for resolving global environmental problems like climate change such a peace movement can contribute greatly to saving and protecting the life-nurturing conditions of our planet.

Hence these two important tasks of reducing violence in daily life in various ways

should be integrated with the wider task of world peace and disarmament, thereby creating possibilities of millions and millions of people becoming a part of this movement.

Needless to add, durable peace is only possible if it is peace with justice and so the peace movement is inevitably committed to a world based on justice and equality.

So much care is taken to ensure that children and young adults are able to pursue education in accordance with their career interests. As violence is such an important cause of distress and destruction, why not give equal attention to ensuring that children and adolescents grow up with values and world-views based on peace with justice?

Nelson Mandela said— "Many who live with violence day in and out assume that it is an intrinsic part of the human condition. But this is not so. Violence can be prevented. Violent cultures can be turned around. In my own country and around the world we have shining examples of how violence has been countered. Governments, communities and individuals can make a difference... Safety and security don't just happen: they are the result of collective consensus and public investment." (C-Counter Currents)

Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril, Earth without Border, A Day in 2071 and Man over Machine.

## Corporal Punishment

# Violation Of Child Rights In Schools



HILAL BUKHARI

*Schools serve the same social functions as prisons and mental institutions - to define, classify, control, and regulate people.*

- Michel Foucault

Modern education needs modern approaches to flourish in the real sense. Punishing the students in the name of teaching them better was a method employed by the teachers in the past. The teachers who failed to teach otherwise would use Corporal Punishment as an alternative. Some teachers even began their practice with this method because they had learned it from their elder generations and carried it forward, thinking that teaching was not possible without corporal punishment. When we were reading in schools in the past many of our teachers used corporal punishment without any kind of fear or a second thought. They considered corporal punishment their basic right and hardly gave any attention to the rights of their students.

The complete banning of Capital Punishment was a paradigm shift towards creating a model education system in the whole country. Even bullying, scolding and harassing the students by mentally torturing them is now considered an offense and the teachers are time and again asked to avoid such harsh and futile techniques which are considered hindrances to the emotional development of the students.

However, even today many teachers in our department think that the standard of our education system has deteriorated because of this ban on corporal punishment. They feel that the status of a teacher has mainly been downgraded in the absence of corporal punishment. Because they feel that indiscipline in the schools is the main result of this ban. I think many among us are yet to understand the importance of making teaching attractive and tempting rather than fearsome.

### Emotional punishment:

- Labeling the child according to his misbehavior and sending him around the school
- Making the child stand at the back of the class to complete the work
- Suspending the child for a couple of days
- Pinning a sheet of paper on the child's back and labeling her, "I am a fool," "I am a donkey," and so on
- Taking the child to every classroom and humiliating her
- Removing the shirts of the boys

Teaching is an art and the teacher as an artist needs to be as attractive as he can during the presentation of his or her art. It is unfortunate that even during this modern age we see a lot of teachers around us who keep employing those outdated and outdated methodologies which have proved futile long ago.

Teachers always evaluate their students but the truth is that the students are better evaluators of their teachers. During those days when we were students, we were attracted by those teachers who were more lively and vibrant. We loved those teachers who blissfully taught us. We hated those who scolded us now and then and we criticized those who kept telling us dogmatic stories and who used boring methodologies while teaching. How can be today's students different from us? They are also like us. They too crave love and are attracted to wonderful behaviors.



According to James Clear the author of "Atomic Habits", the second law of behavior change is to make it attractive. He means to say that we should make the thing attractive which we want to adopt as our habit. Have you ever wondered why more students feel that languages are more interesting or easier to learn than sciences and maths? One of the main reasons is that many science and maths teachers are not able to relate their teachings to life. Some of them even just try to transfer the things without making it interesting to the students. Some teach sciences and maths without having their faith in them. They believe in other dogmatic things and keep teaching their subjects which they consider nothing more than use-

doubt our inspirations for providing better and proper education to our young generations.

### Types of corporal punishment in schools

#### Physical punishment:

- Making the child stand as a wall chair
- Keeping the schoolbag on the child's head
- Making the child stand under the sun for the entire day
- Making the child to kneel and do the work and then enter the classroom
- Making the child stand on the bench
- Making the child raise his hands
- Making the child hold a pencil in

Western education system would not have been better than our reflecting better, more reliable, and enduring results.

How can we inspire our teachers to learn love despite scolding the students? How can we make them understand that love has more power to achieve great things in this world than its opposite? As Laszlo once said, "A genius is not born, but is educated and trained." So it is the hard work of a great teacher who persists with patience till he discovers the gems by breaking the hardest stones.

It is easy to blame others for their failures. It is called the fixed mindset. It can not take us toward real growth and progress. The growth mindset is when we own our failures with an open heart

Chanakya the great Indian thinker says, "Do not judge the future of a person based on his (or her) present condition, because time has the power to change black coal into shiny diamond." We have witnessed time and again that many students who were considered average achieved great things in the future.

### Negative reinforcement:

- Asking the parents to meet the teacher or asking the child to get explanatory letters from the parents
- Sending the child back home or making him stand outside the school gate
- Making the child sit on the floor of the classroom
- Making the child clean the premises
- Making the child run around the building or the playground
- Sending the child to the principal
- Making the child teach in the class
- Making the child stand until the teacher comes
- Giving oral warnings and writing letters in the school diary or calendar
- Threatening to give TC
- Forbidding the child to participate in games or other activities
- Deducting the marks
- Treating three late-comings equal to one day's absence
- Giving excessive imposition
- Imposing a fine
- Not allowing the child to enter the class



less and a burden for themselves. I believe you can never do justice to teaching a subject unless and until you love that subject.

Teachers are considered as the role models. Our behavior must be so attractive and tempting that it forces the students to act more interestingly. We can build better habits among our students by tempting them through our attractive behaviors. If we make teaching and learning boring we should not dream it might bring great results. Education is now considered a fundamental right in our country. We can hardly dream of a perfect society in the modern world in the absence of a proper educational system. Those countries which have achieved more development and progress due to better education are without any

- her mouth and stand
- Making the child hold his ears by looping the hands behind the knees
- Tying the hands
- Making the child to do sit-ups
- Caning and pinching
- Twisting the ears

However, living in these so-called third-world and backward countries, we still doubt the modern and more progressive approaches employed by the developed societies and keep dreaming about those age-old methods of teaching which have never helped us in the long run. How can we motivate those teachers who feel that teaching is impossible in the absence of Corporal punishment? If it had been the reality then the

ponder over our faults and work hard by learning how to correct our past mistakes to bring better results.

A teacher has to be attractive physically, mentally as well as emotionally so the students are motivated automatically to pursue the path he or she is treading on. A teacher's smile can be so soothing and blissful for a student which has much might have more power to shape his future than the frown which may often be disgusting and discouraging for their tender hearts and minds. A teacher must avoid the habit of bullying his or her students after the assessment of their academic and behavioral achievements. A student might be average academically in the present but we can not anyone by assessing his or her present only.

We could hardly achieve anything substantial in the name of proper discipline, fear psychosis, and punishment. I feel we have not learned the great lesson of practicing before we preach ourselves. How can a teacher force his or her student to read and study the books when he or she ignores their importance altogether? A teacher can become a real role model for his or her pupils through his behavior. We have to learn the basic meaning of that great proverb, "Practice before you preach." Then and only then may we hope to build a model society consisting of great persons.

Capital Punishment with its different offshoots is already dead and dormant now. We only need to bury its decaying corpse now which might be reeking in our minds. It was not better than a monster for us and our tender generations since ages. We must learn to apply the alternative techniques properly so that our education system perfectly competes with contemporary modern societies fruitfully and brings the desired results efficiently and effectively.

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# Can Walking 15,000 Steps Daily Boost Life Span?

**W**alking is indeed healthy and can have numerous benefits for overall health and well-being. Walking is a low-impact exercise that most people can incorporate into their daily routines without needing specialised equipment or facilities.

It offers cardiovascular benefits, helps maintain a healthy weight, strengthens muscles and bones, improves mood, and enhances overall fitness. Walking 15,000 steps daily can be a beneficial goal for many individuals. Read on as we share the many benefits of walking 15,000 steps daily.

10 Ways walking 15,000 steps daily can increase life span:

1. Improved cardiovascular health

Regular walking strengthens the heart, lowers blood pressure, and improves circulation, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

2. Weight management

Walking burns calories, aiding in weight loss or maintenance. Maintaining a healthy weight lowers the risk of obesity-related illnesses like diabetes and certain cancers.

3. Enhanced respiratory function

Regular walking improves lung capacity and function, promoting better respiratory



health. This can boost longevity.

4. Stronger muscles and bones

Walking is a weight-bearing exercise that helps maintain bone density and muscle

strength, reducing the risk of osteoporosis and frailty as you age.

5. Better mental health

Physical activity releases endorphins, reducing stress, anxiety, and depression. Regu-

lar walking can also improve cognitive function and lower the risk of dementia.

6. Increased energy levels

Walking boosts energy levels by improving circulation and oxygen flow through-

out the body, leaving you feeling more alert and energetic.

7. Enhanced immune function

Regular moderate exercise, like walking, supports a healthy immune system,

reducing the risk of infections and illnesses.

8. Improved sleep quality

Regular physical activity can help regulate sleep patterns, promoting deeper and more restful sleep, which is

crucial for overall health and longevity.

9. Lowered risk of chronic diseases

Walking regularly can help lower the risk of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, and metabolic syndrome.

10. Longevity benefits

Research suggests that regular physical activity, including walking, is associated with a longer lifespan. Walking 15,000 steps daily contributes to this by improving overall health and reducing the risk of premature death.

If you're not accustomed to walking long distances, it's essential to start gradually and build up your step count over time. Pushing yourself too hard too soon can lead to fatigue, soreness, or even injury. Invest in a pair of comfortable and supportive walking shoes to prevent foot pain, blisters, or other discomforts. Proper footwear can also help maintain good posture and reduce the risk of injury.

Overall, walking 15,000 steps daily can be a beneficial and achievable goal for improving health and well-being, but it's essential to listen to your body, prioritise safety, and take steps to prevent injury or overexertion. If you have any underlying health conditions or concerns, consult with a healthcare professional before starting a new exercise regimen.

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

### Elections In J&K

mentioned that those who have denied democracy and welfare to Kashmir for 75 years should be punished.

Talking about BJP's performance in the upcoming Lok Sabha 2024 elections, Shah said he believes the party will give its best performance to date in Uttar Pradesh and will get more seats than in the 2014 polls.

The minister also stated that India will defeat the 'parivaar-waad' parties.

### Nomination Process

seats, the NPP won five seats, the Congress secured four seats, the PPA won one seat and two Independent candidates also won.

The BJP has declared candidates for all the assembly seats, and named Union minister Kiren Rijiju for the Arunachal West Lok Sabha seat and Tapir Gao as its candidate for the Arunachal East seat.

In the first phase in Assam, Kaziranga, Sonitpur, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur will go to the polls on April 19.

The prominent candidates in the fray for the first phase are Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal from Dibrugarh against the United Opposition Front of Assam's Lurinjyoti Gogoi, Congress deputy leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi against sitting BJP MP Topon Gogoi from Jorhat and BJP Rajya Sabha member Kamakhya Prasad Tasa against former Congress MLA Roseлина Tirkey in Kaziranga.

In Puducherry, Returning Officer A Kulothungan issued the statutory notification for the lone Lok Sabha seat in the Union territory.

The Udhampur-Kathua Lok Sabha constituency in Jammu and Kashmir is one of 102 segments across the country going to polls in the first phase.

So far only BJP and Democratic Progressive Azad Party have announced their candidates for the seat. Sitting MP and Union minister Jitendra Singh and former minister G M Saroori are candidates of BJP and DPAP respectively.

### EC Asks Authorities

and four assembly polls came into force, it has received complaints alleging that unauthorised political advertisements are still being displayed in many places across the country.

The Congress had recently raised the issue with the poll panel.

"All unauthorised political advertisements, in the form of wall writings, posters, papers or defacement in any other form, cutouts, hoardings, banner flags were ordered to be removed in a time-bound manner from public spaces like railway stations, bus stands, airports, railway bridges, roadways, government buses, electric/telephone poles, municipal/local bodies' building and a strict compliance in this was to be ensured," it reminded the governments.

The Commission said it has taken a "serious note" of the non-compliance or partial-compliance of its instructions.

It directed all state and union territory governments to "immediately remove all unauthorised political advertisements and ensure full compliance of its instructions".

It sought a compliance report in this regard by 5 pm on Thursday.(Agencies)

### Met Predicts 2-Day

tomorrow and under its influence light to moderate rain and snow is expected to commence in parts of Kashmir from tomorrow afternoon onwards.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the weather would remain generally cloudy; there is a possibility of light to moderate rains, snow at many places with thunder, lightning and gusty winds over parts of Kashmir and Jammu division.

An Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng also stated that by evening tomorrow, most parts in Kashmir Valley would have received a spell of rain and snow.

Rain and snow can activities can continue in some areas on 22nd March, he said, adding that least impact of WD is expected in Jammu, Samba, and Kathua districts.

There is a possibility of hailstorm and gusty winds in some areas during this period, he added.

However, the MeT Director stated that the weather would remain generally dry on March 23 while on March 24, the weather is expected to remain generally cloudy with light rain and snow at isolated places.

While the weather is expected to remain dry during March 25 and 26, the MeT Director said on March 27 to March 29, the weather would remain generally cloudy with possibility of light rain and snow at few places—(KNO)

### 11Th Standard Question

exams of physical education paper. Candidates appearing in the annual regular exams of the 12th standard expressed concern about the lackadaisical approach of the board.

One of the students said that the examination pattern of physical education was entirely different as was shown and notified by the board.

"Ironically, only two marks were taken from the 12th standard syllabus. Rest the question paper of 12th standard was set from 11th standard syllabus," she said.

One of the exam in-charge said that students in the center were crying 'even a couple of students fainted'.

Officials of JKBOSE said, "We have postponed the exams and will issue the notification in while."

"We got the information of the issue and we have decided to reschedule the exams. New dates will be issued soon," the official said.

Meanwhile school education department has constituted a committee to enquire about the distribution of wrong question paper.

Administrative Secretary, School Education Department Piyush Singla accordingly accorded the constitution of committee, comprising of Directors of School Education of both Jammu and Kashmir regions.

Singla said that the shall enquire into the incident of wrong distribution of 11th class question paper to 12th class students appeared in the Board examination on March-20-2024 by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education.

It also said that the committee shall look into circumstances of the cancellation of the examination and the responsibility shall be fixed on supervisory and administrative level for the negligence.

"The committee shall co-opt any Chief Education Officer and other officer and submit its findings report to the administrative within seven days," it reads—(KNO)

### Northern Railway

that there are system errors occurring at various locations, they implementing rate reductions across all stations—(KNO)

### NGT Issues Notices

Valley, Hokarsar near Srinagar and Shalbug in the central district of Ganderbal.

A bench of National Green Tribunal Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava and Expert Member A Senthil Vel said, "The news item reflects the need for effective management of wetlands and water bodies and swift and tangible measures to ensure their sustainability."

It also raised a "substantial issue" related to compliance with the environmental norms and implementation of the provisions of the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules and the Environment (Protection) Act.

In an order passed last week, the tribunal impleaded as parties several authorities, including member secretaries of the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee and the Central Pollution Control Board, the secretary of the Union Territory's Forest, Ecology and Environment department and the regional officer of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

"Let notice be issued to the above respondent for filing their response at least one week before the next date of hearing (on May 22)," the tribunal said.

It noted that a report was submitted by the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee regarding the monitoring of nine wetlands — Hokarsar, Mirgund, Manibugh, Freshkooori, Chatlam, Kranchoo, Shalbugh, Hygam and Manasbal.

The committee, however, did not "disclose the physicochemical and biological, including bacteriological, data in terms of numeric values which may be needed for proper assessment of water bodies", the tribunal noted. (Agencies)

### Govt Appoints

appoint an ombudsman, who is empowered to inquire into the complaints of discrimination against HIV infected persons and providing of healthcare services to them.

As per the Act, the ombudsman shall submit a report to the state/UT government every six months stating the number and nature of complaints received, the actions taken and orders passed. There is also a provision of penalty of Rs 10,000 if the ombudsman's order is not complied with—(KNO)

### Demand For

Fruit Growers and Dealers Association, Fayaz Ahmad Malik said.

With Ramadan being a time of increased consumption of fruits and other nutritious foods, Kashmiri apples have become a staple on iftar tables in many households.

According to reports, the demand for Kashmiri apples has soared in major

cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Bengaluru.

Apple growers said the rate of apples ranges between Rs 1500-1600 in various fruit markets in India.

"CA-stored apples get a good price since they become available in various cities of India during the off-season. Right now an apple box costs from Rs 1500-1600," Malik said.

Apple growers said Ramadan often proves to be a lucrative season for Kashmiri apples given its demand in various cities of India.

"During the current season, only Kashmiri apples become available in the markets of India. So, growers ship a bulk quantity of apples to various fruit markets. The CA-stored apples will hit markets for the next three months," said Shabir Ahmad Khan, an apple grower who too has preferred to ship his CA stored apple to New Delhi's Azadpur fruit Mandi during Ramadan.

CA stores have come as a shot in the arm for apple growers of Kashmir, who get good returns of the crop during the off-season.

As per the apple growers all the CA stores were occupied at full capacity as the rates of apples this season have been comparatively better—(KNO)

### Blooming Almond

blossoms to celebrate the arrival of spring, and the air is filled with a festive look—(KNO)

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# India will become the world leader in AI: PM Modi

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that he was convinced that India will become the world leader in AI with its young innovators emerging as a driving force to take the nation ahead.

Addressing the Startup Mahakumbh at the Bharat Mandapam here, the Prime Minister said, "India will have the upper hand in AI and we will not let the opportunity go."

He exhorted the young startup founders to find solutions that will not only help India solve its problems and achieve the goal of Viskit Bharat but also create a better future for the world.

PM Modi said tried and trusted innovations that were successful in India with its diverse geography would work anywhere in the world.

He said that India had now become the third largest startup ecosystem in the world, and the government had for the first time introduced the chapter of Startups as an Engine of Growth in the G-20 agenda this year bringing the country's innovative talent on the world map.

PM Modi pointed out that India's startup ecosystem



had come a long way since he first launched the Start-up India and Stand up India movements at a small gathering in Vigyan Bhavan attended by a few experts.

"Today the ecosystem has grown with over 1.25 lakh registered startups in the country and with which over 12 lakh youngsters are linked. The startups are providing employment on a large scale and the young founders have turned out to be job creators instead of mere job seekers as was the case earlier in the country," he added.

He pointed out that over 45 per cent of the startup founders were

women and this showed how the daughters of the country were playing an important role in nation building after the technological empowerment.

PM Modi said that the government's policies of providing funds and incubators at leading educational institutions, such as IITs, to nurture startups have borne fruit and the huge numbers of the startup ecosystem are a reflection of this success story.

He also assured the young talent that the government would invest thousands of crores in the National Research Foundation to promote innovation.

PM Modi pointed out that that in the interim budget presented ahead of the polls, as much as Rs 1 lakh crore has been allocated for Research and Innovation and the funds would be made available to support long term projects.

He also assured the young tech entrepreneurs that the government was taking all necessary steps such as digital protection to promote startups.

He said that startups had a key role to play in making India the world's third largest economy, which he had guaranteed would take place during his third term as the PM.

The Prime Minister exhorted the young tech entrepreneurs must help others, by way of intelligent advice, to take the entire system ahead.

"Just as someone held your hand to help you succeed, you must also hold the hand of some aspiring youngsters to help them succeed," PM Modi remarked.

He also advised them to visit schools and colleges to inspire young minds with ideas so that "we develop a culture of innovation in the country".

PM Modi pointed out that India had succeeded in "democratising technology" as the startup system had spread to small towns

across the country and did not distinguish between haves and have nots.

Before his speech, PM Modi took a round of the pavilion and interacted with the young entrepreneurs to get a first-hand feel of their products.

The Startup Mahakumbh organised by the Commerce and Industry Ministry is India's largest startup event and saw "unprecedented participation," serving as a dynamic platform for all stakeholders in the country's startup ecosystem, according to an official statement.

The event, aimed at nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship nationwide, attracted over 2000 startups, 1000+ investors, 100+ unicorns, 300+ incubators & accelerators, 3,000+ conference delegates, 10+ country delegations, and 50,000+ business visitors. It offered a vibrant atmosphere for collaboration and networking, the ministry's statement added.

The event featured 10 thematic pavilions, showcasing the breadth and depth of innovation in areas such as DeepTech, AI & SaaS, Fintech, Agritech, Biotech & Pharma, Climate Tech, Gaming & E-Sports, D2C, B2B & Manufacturing, and Incubators.

## Modi govt better in fulfilling election manifestos compared to Congress: UBS

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** An analysis by global brokerage UBS of the past four general election manifestos (2004-24) suggests that the Modi government was better in fulfilling their stated manifesto compared to Congress.

The Modi government's focus on balancing economic reforms with social welfare schemes for the bottom of the pyramid (including a potable water connection for every household, the state provision of housing support and medical insurance, the opening of bank accounts, free LPG connections and free food rations, among others) seems to have worked in their favour, UBS said.

Besides economic reforms, recent opinion polls suggest the government's handling of COVID-19, building the Ram Temple and the revocation of Article 370 have helped bolster support, UBS said.

Over the past year, the recovery in rural demand has been mixed owing to weather related uncertainty, tepid rural wage growth and the government's sup-

ply-side measures (to contain inflation). However, the Modi government has not announced substantial pro-rural populist schemes in the run-up to the 2024 elections to entice voters, as per UBS.

Instead, the government has focused on inclusive growth (partly to cover the pandemic shock) with expenditure on rural-focused schemes (including drinking water, employment support, housing and rural roads) recording a 16 per cent CAGR over FY19-24. On the contrary, it seems the women-centric policies have taken centre stage, especially since 2023, UBS said.

The growing inclination of political parties to offer targeted welfare benefits to women (cash support, free bus travel, cooking gas subsidies, women-centric legislation, amongst others) is closely linked to the rising percentage of women participating in the electoral process over the years.

Notably, the voter turnout reversed in the 2019 election for the first time with female voter turnout being higher than that of males, UBS said.

## Suspense continues over Raj Thackeray's MNS joining NDA-BJP camp

IAN S

**MUMBAI:** Suspense continued over the likelihood of the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) joining hands with the Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), and contesting the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

MNS President Raj Thackeray and his son Amit R. Thackeray went to Delhi to meet with the BJP top brass on Tuesday, where they held a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah ostensibly to seal an alliance deal, marking a new twist in Maharashtra politics.

Senior MNS leader Bala Nandgaonkar said on Tuesday evening that "they had a very cordial meeting and discussed many things".

"There may be another meeting soon in Mumbai with other BJP leaders... Thereafter, a final decision will be taken in the next one or two days. That's all I can say for now," Nandgaonkar said in Mumbai.

Earlier, MNS chief spokesperson Sandeep Deshpande said that "whatever Raj Thackeray decides, it will be in the interest of the party and



the state".

On the other hand, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) Working President Supriya Sule said that in case the MNS opts to join the national opposition INDIA bloc, it will be "welcomed and accorded dignity", adding to the suspense on Raj Thackeray's political manoeuvres.

In a brief banter with the mediapersons before the meeting with Amit Shah, Raj Thackeray kept up the mystery saying, "I have no idea... I was only told to come... I don't know of any meetings."

The political movements came barely hours after Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde declared that the Mahayuti and the

18-year-old MNS are on the same page as far as Hindutva is concerned, and an appropriate decision would be taken on including the MNS in the NDA fold.

Nationalist Congress Party Minister Chhagan Bhubal diplomatically said the MNS - currently having one MLA and influence in certain pockets - would be welcomed if it joins the NDA-Mahayuti alliance.

Commenting on the goings-on, ex-CM and Shiv Sena (UBT) President Uddhav Thackeray said "the BJP is attempting to hijack another Thackeray family member" as it cannot seek votes in Maharashtra without the name of Balasaheb Thackeray.

Prominent opposition leaders like Atul Londe (Congress), Supriya Sule, Jitendra Awhad, Rohit R. Pawar, Clyde Crasto (NCP-SP), and Kishore Tiwari (SS-UBT) have given strong reactions, some referring to the MNS' perceived anti-North Indian stance and other issues.

SS (UBT) chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut dismissively said that MNS' entry into the NDA "will not have any political impact" in the state.

MahaYuti alliance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar said that if the MNS decides to join hands with the BJP, "it will be in the interest of Hindutva, the state, and the country".

Addressing a party event last week, Raj Thackeray -- the estranged cousin of Uddhav Thackeray -- dropped broad hints of plunging into the LS polls. He is slated to discuss the issue with his party leaders on Thursday (March 21).

At the same time, Raj Thackeray also emphasised the party's staunch Hindutva credentials plus a committed cadre base, though there have been internal rumblings that the MNS is yet to taste 'real' power in the 18 years of its existence.

## Hopes run high for BJP in UP's first phase of polls

IAN S

**LUCKNOW:** Hopes run high for the BJP in the first phase of elections in Uttar Pradesh. With Rashtriya Lok Dal as its ally, the BJP is confident of winning all seats here.

"The BJP-RLD combine will sweep in the first phase. The public mood is in our favour and so are the electoral combinations," said the party functionary.

In 2019 elections, SP-BSP combine had won five seats -- Saharanpur, Bijnor, Nagina went to the BSP, and Moradabad and Rampur to the Samajwadi Party (SP).

This time BJP has given Bijnor to ally Rashtriya Lok Dal but is treading cautiously in other three constituencies. RLD has fielded its Meerapur MLA Chandan Chauhan, a Gurjar, against SP candidate Yashveer Singh, a Dalit in Bijnor. The BSP has fielded Bijendra Singh, a Jat, who left RLD to join Mayawati's party.

In Rampur, BJP has fielded Ghanshyam Lodhi who had defeated SP's Asim Raja in 2022 bypoll when the seat fell vacant after the disqualification of SP leader Azam Khan who was convicted

in a criminal case. SP, which has tied-up with Congress, is yet to name its candidate for Rampur but the Azam Khan factor will continue to play a role even though his entire family is missing from the elections this time.

The BJP is trying to wrest back Saharanpur where BSP's Haji Fazlur Rehman had defeated its candidate Raghav Lakhani Pal by 24,000 votes in 2019.

In Moradabad, which was won by SP's S.T. Hasan in 2019, is also on BJP's bucket list this time. However, both BJP and SP-Congress combine, are yet to name the candidates for these two seats.

Kairana is also a keenly watched seat which hit headlines ahead of 2017 UP elections amid reports of exodus of Hindu families. BJP has repeated sitting MP Pradeep Chaudhary, a Gurjar, against SP's Iqra Hasan, sister of SP's Kairana MLA Nahid Hasan.

A postgraduate in international law from the school of Oriental and African Studies, London University, Iqra had campaigned extensively for Nahid during the 2022 Assembly polls. Inci-



Kumar, a Jatav, instead of Yashwant Singh. He is up against SP's Manoj Kumar. BSP has yet to announce its candidate. Speculation is rife that Dalit leader and Azad Samaj Party chief Chandrashekhar Azad will also throw his hat in the ring from Nagina and if he does, it will make the contest increasingly interesting.

The focus, however, in the first phase, is on the Pilibhit seat because the BJP is yet to decide on fielding its sitting MP Varun Gandhi who has been openly critical of his own party since the farmers' protest against agricultural laws in 2021. The Samajwadi Party has already said that it is 'open' to the idea of fielding Varun Gandhi in Pilibhit if he does not go with BJP. His mother Maneka Gandhi, MP from Sultanpur, too has been keeping a low profile in the party, after the BJP dropped the mother-son from the national executive committee in 2021. Whether or not the BJP names Varun Gandhi as its candidate, there is little doubt that the contest in Pilibhit will remain in public focus.

dentally, it was the tussle over Kairana that made RLD sever its ties with SP because Akhilesh Yadav was keen on Iqra contesting the seat. BSP is yet to name a candidate though speculations are rife that Mayawati may pick a Muslim to cut SP's Muslim votes.

In Muzaffarnagar, BJP is banking on its sitting MP and Union Minister Sanjeev Baliyan, a Jat, who had defeated the then RLD chief Ajit Singh by a slender margin of 6,500 votes in 2019. He is pitted against SP's Harendra Malik, also a Jat. The BSP, on the other hand, has played the OBC card by fielding Dara Singh Prajapati.

The reserved seat of Nagina was won by BSP's Girish Chandra in 2019 by defeating BJP's Yashwant Singh, and will now see a change of candidates. The BJP has opted for MLA Om

### NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY

## PM to land in Bhutan on Thursday

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold talks with Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay as he lands in the Himalayan nation on Thursday, giving a further fillip to bilateral relations.

The state visit from March 21-22 is in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between India and Bhutan, and the government's emphasis on its Neighbourhood First Policy.

"India and Bhutan share a unique and enduring partnership, which is rooted in mutual trust, understanding, and goodwill. Our shared spiritual heritage and warm people-to-people ties add depth and vibrancy to our exceptional relations," a Ministry of External Affairs release said on Tuesday.

The visit will provide an opportunity for both sides to exchange views on bilateral and regional matters of interest and deliberate on ways to expand and

intensify our exemplary partnership between the two nations, MEA said.

India's 'Neighbourhood First Policy' guides its approach towards the management of relations with countries in its immediate neighbourhood.

These countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

As per MEA, the policy, inter alia, is aimed at enhancing physical, digital, and people-to-people connectivity across the region, as well as augmenting trade and commerce.

The visit comes after PM Modi accepted an invitation extended by his counterpart Tobgay last week, on behalf of the king Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, to visit Bhutan.

PM Tobgay visited India from March 14-18, marking his first overseas trip after assuming office in January this year.

Sharing warm hugs and handshakes, he met PM Modi and discussed a range of issues to strengthen relations between the

two neighbouring nations.

After meeting PM Modi, PM Tobgay wrote in a post on X handle: "Wonderful to meet my friend, Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi. I thanked him for his steadfast support to Bhutan, and we discussed a range of issues to strengthen relations between Bhutan and India. Prime Minister Modi Ji also agreed to visit Bhutan soon... next week, in fact!"

Contributing to the socio-economic well-being of the people of Bhutan, India gave development assistance of Rs 5,000 crore to the country's 12th Five Year Plan (FYP).

India has also committed to stepping up support for the country's 13th FYP, including a request for the Economic Stimulus Programme.

India's further development assistance to Bhutan, as part of its Neighbourhood First Policy, will focus on road, rail, air, and digital connectivity, and sectors like agriculture, healthcare, education, skill, and cultural preservation.

### MV Ruen rescue

## Bulgarian President thanks his Indian counterpart Droupadi Murmu

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Bulgarian President Rumen Radev expressed his gratitude to President Droupadi Murmu in a phone call on Wednesday after the Indian Navy's successful rescue operation on the hijacked Bulgarian ship, MV Ruen.

"President Droupadi Murmu received a telephone call from President Rumen Radev of Bulgaria, who conveyed his gratitude for Indian Navy's rescue of the hijacked Bulgarian Vessel MV Ruen and its crew, including 7 Bulgarian nationals," a post on Rashtrapati Bhavan's X handle said.

"The two leaders agreed to further strengthen the India-Bulgaria partnership based on shared values and interests," the post added.

Indian Navy's INS Kolkata on Saturday successfully rescued 17 crew members from ex-MV Ruen, and coerced all 35 Somali pirates to surrender in a 40-hour-long operation.



The merchant vessel with Bulgarians, Myanmar and one Angolan citizen onboard was hijacked in December, 2023.

President Radev also expressed his "sincere gratitude" to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who said that India was committed to protecting freedom of navigation and combating piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean region.

For the operation, the Indian Navy said it deployed its P-8 maritime patrol aircraft, frontline ships INS Kolkata and INS Subhadra, and high-altitude long-endurance (HALE) unmanned aerial

vehicle.

The vessel was also sanitised for the presence of illegal arms, ammunition and contraband.

Officials said that MV Ruen, which was reported to have sailed out as a pirate ship for conducting acts of piracy on the high seas, was intercepted by an Indian Navy warship on Friday.

The vessel opened fire on the warship, which took action as per international law, in self-defence and to counter piracy, with minimal force necessary to neutralise the pirates' threat to shipping and seafarers, an Indian Navy statement said.

## PM Modi dials Vladimir Putin, congratulates him on poll victory

IAN S

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday congratulated Russian President Vladimir Putin on his landslide victory in the presidential elections on Sunday, and expressed his sincere wishes for the well-being and prosperity of the Russian people.

In a "warm and friendly" and "detailed" telephone conversation, the Russian President, in turn, wished PM Modi a successful conduct of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in India.

"Both sides noted with satisfaction that mutually beneficial ties in the trade, economic and investment fields, and in the fields of energy and transport are progressively and dynamically developing in line with a particularly privileged strategic partnership," a Kremlin readout said on Wednesday.

An exchange of views between the two lead-

ers was held on several issues on the international agenda, in particular the situation around Ukraine.

In addition, the mood for further coordination between Russia and India in multilateral formats, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and BRICS, was confirmed. PM Modi is expected



to travel to Russia for the BRICS Summit in Kazan from October 22 to 24.

Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship began on January 1 this year with the motto 'Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security'.

ARTICLE 370 REVOCATION

# Over 35 J&K Leaders Exit Old Camps

ALI ASAD

**SRINAGAR:** The 2024 Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir are anticipated to be both significant and intriguing for several reasons. Primarily, following the abrogation of Article 370, it will serve as a litmus test in the altered political landscape for the first time.

Over the past five years, there has been a considerable transformation in the political dynamics of the region. During the electioneering process, one can expect to witness the emergence of contenders affiliated with non-traditional political entities challenging the dominance of established family-based parties. Notably, three newly registered parties have surfaced in Jammu and Kashmir, poised to challenge their

parent parties. Numerous leaders, former ministers, and ex-MLAs are anticipated to actively engage in politics within this evolved political milieu. A notable trend has been the significant number of leaders, former ministers, and MLAs switching allegiances in Jammu and Kashmir.

Following the revocation of Article 370, Kashmir experienced initial political upheaval. Several senior leaders distanced themselves from the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Notably, former minister Syed Altaf Bukhari, previously aligned with PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, parted ways with the PDP to establish a new entity, Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party. In the inaugural District Development Council (DDC) elections,

the party demonstrated commendable performance in various regions, challenging the dominance of its parent party, the PDP. Subsequently, influential leader Ghulam Nabi Azad severed ties with the Congress to form the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP).

The emergence of DPAP stirred significant commotion within the Congress, leading to the defection of several former ministers and MLAs to Azad's camp. However, some leaders who initially joined Azad eventually returned to the Congress fold. DPAP is currently exploring electoral prospects across various constituencies, including Jammu, Udhampur, and Anantnag-Rajouri. Additionally, the Apni Party is actively considering alliance possibilities in Kash-

mir. Advocate Ankush Sharma's Ekam Sanatan Dharma Dal, primarily active in the Jammu division, has also emerged as a noteworthy political entity.

NC faced a setback in the Jammu division when its divisional president, Devendra Singh Rana, along with his supporters, joined the BJP in 2022. Notably, former minister Surjit Singh Salathia accompanied him, followed by former MLAs Kamal Arora and Premeasagar Aziz defecting from the NC. Recently, after the hills were granted Scheduled Tribe (ST) reservation status, Dr. Shahnaz Ganai, an MLC from Poonch, formally joined the BJP. Additionally, former MLA Mush-taq Bukhari, Chaudhary Arshad, Dharamveer Singh Jamwal, Somnath

Khajuria, among others, have joined the party.

In addition to Syed Altaf Bukhari, several other notable figures have severed ties with the PDP, including former minister Imran Raza Ansari, Basharat Bukhari, Abdul Rahim Rather, former Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Baig, former minister Haseeb Drabu, Javed Mustafa Mir, and Ashraf Mir. Moreover, some relatives of Mehbooba Mufti have also disassociated themselves from the party. Consequently, NC, aligned with the INDIA alliance, has unequivocally stated its reluctance to engage in any seat-sharing agreement with the PDP. Furthermore, former MLA Sheikh Jabbar and former Deputy CM Parvez Qadri have also parted ways with the NC—(KNO)

Gun license to ineligible persons

## CBI files two chargesheets against 15 accused

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday said to have filed two chargesheets against 15 accused in the Court of Special Judge, CBI Cases, Srinagar in an ongoing investigation of a case related to issuance of large number of FireArms licenses in J&K to ineligible persons in violation of Rules during the period 2012-16.

As per a statement issued, the spokesman said that the case was registered by CBI in 2018 on the request of the then State Government of Jammu & Kashmir and further notification of DoPT, Govt of India, transferring to CBI investigation of FIR No.18 of 2018 dated 17.05.2018 registered in Vigilance Organisation Kashmir (VOK). The matter pertains to issuance of large number of arms license to ineligible persons without due

process during the period 2012 to 2016, it said.

"One of the charge sheets was filed under various sections of RPC, PC Act & Arms Act against 10 accused including the then District Magistrate, Kupwara, 4 gun house

Authority/District Magistrate with middlemen and other gun house dealers. In furtherance of the criminal conspiracy, the gun house dealers lured the defence personnel posted at far away places in the country and got their arms license issued from district Kupwara in an illegal manner, despite those personnel neither being resident of the State nor posted in the district, without police verification. Alleged illegal gratification per license were sought and collected by the gun house dealers and middlemen, the statement said.

Issuance of large number of arms licenses in a bordering district like Kupwara in illegal manner to ineligible persons is a matter of grave concern and poses serious threat to law & order and public safety, it said, adding that further investigation is going on—(KNO)



dealers and middleman while another charge sheet was filed under similar sections against the then ADM, Kupwara and 4 others including gun house dealer and middlemen for issuance of large number of such licenses to ineligible persons," the statement said.

Investigation disclosed the nexus of then Licens-

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

## DEO Sgr conducts comprehensive inspection of Election Strong rooms



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat Wednesday conducted comprehensive inspection of proposed election Strong Rooms cum Collection/ Distribution Centres being established for all 08 Assembly constituencies of Srinagar District.

The inspection was undertaken to assess the preparedness for smooth conduct of the upcoming Lok Sabha Election-2024 in the District.

During the visit, the DEO/DC took onsite review of the arrangements and facilities at Strong Room cum Collection/ Distribution Centres for all 08 Assembly Constituencies viz 19-Hazratbal, 20-Khanyar, 21-Habakadal, 22-LalChowk,

23-Chanapora, 24-Zadibal, 25-Eidgah and 26-Central Shalteng.

During the inspection, the DEO stressed upon the concerned Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) to take up necessary measures to ensure that all required arrangements are put in place well in advance to facilitate smooth and efficient election process.

He asked them to make proper arrangements for polling staff, adequate parking and separate entry/exit of the vehicles carrying election material at Strong Rooms cum Collection/ Distribution Centres.

He also laid emphasis on placing adequate spaces for counters to be placed at Collection/Distribution Centres in order to avoid any cluttering during distribution/collection of election materials.

While interacting with

the AROs and other concerned staff, the DEO/DC underscored the importance of ensuring that all Strong Rooms cum Collection/ Distribution Centres adhere to prescribed standards of Election Commission of India to uphold the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

He stressed on proper handling/ management of election material besides ensuring efficient and secure mechanisms for its storage.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ARO/ERO- Zadibal), Dr Khalid Hussain Malik, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ARO/ERO- Hazratbal), Syed Ahmad Kataria, Deputy District Election Officer, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Other AROs, and other concerned officers accompanied the DEO during the visit.

## Meeting of Election Expenditure Monitoring Teams held in G'bal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**GANDERBAL:** In a concerted effort to ensure transparency and fairness in the electoral process, the Deputy District Election Officer (Dy. DEO) Ganderbal, Abid Iqbal Malik along with the Election Expenditure Monitoring Teams, convened a pivotal meeting at the District Treasury Officer's office, here Wednesday.

The meeting brought together a dedicated group of officials tasked with overseeing and monitoring election expenditure.

With the upcoming elections looming on the horizon, the discussions were centered on enhancing the efficacy of monitoring mechanisms and fostering collaboration among the teams to uphold the integrity of the electoral process.



Dy.DEO underscored the paramount importance of adhering to stringent guidelines and protocols to curb any potential malpractices related to election expenditure.

Emphasizing the significance of their role in maintaining a level playing field for all candidates, the Dy.DEO urged the teams to exercise diligence and impartiality in their duties.

Furthermore, strategies for leveraging technology and data analytics to streamline monitoring efforts were deliberated upon, with a focus on

leveraging innovative tools to identify and address discrepancies promptly.

In adherence to the Election Commission's directives, the meeting concluded with a renewed resolve to uphold the democratic values and principles enshrined in the electoral process, thereby ensuring a level playing field for all stakeholders involved.

The Meeting was attended by Assistant Expenditure Observers for both the ACs of District Ganderbal, members of Accounting Teams, and Expenditure Monitoring Cell.

MODEL COC GUIDELINES

## DEO Budgam sensitises recognised political parties

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BUDGAM:** The District Election Officer (DEO) Budgam, Akshay Labroo Wednesday chaired a meeting with representatives of the recognised political parties.

At the outset, the representatives of political parties were sensitized regarding the strict adherence to Model Code of Conduct (MCC) during the upcoming Lok- Sabha 2024 elections in the district.

The DEO emphasized that all guidelines of Election Commission of India (ECI), shall be implemented and followed in letter and spirit in the district.

He urged political parties to ensure that ECI's guidelines on Model Code of Conduct for Political Parties are complied with.

He also urged political parties to give their cooperation to the district administration for conduct of free, fair and smooth



elections in the district.

The DEO said that the district administration is committed to implementing the ECI's guidelines in letter and spirit and to ensure strict implementation of MCC.

He also informed that a dedicated Media Centre and the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee facility has also been established at District Information Centre Budgam.

Meanwhile, Additional District Development Commissioner Budgam, Nodal Officer, MCC also briefed

the political parties regarding the MCC and urged them to follow all guidelines in letter and spirit.

Later, the DEO also chaired meeting of Bank Heads and instructed them to facilitate candidates smooth opening of bank accounts and issuance of cheque books as per the ECI guidelines.

The bank heads were also sensitized about the guidelines of ECI on reporting of suspicious bank transactions and reporting same to the concerned agencies.

INDIA AT UN

## India moving towards Viksit Bharat, focus on women-led development

IANS

**UNITED NATIONS:** Highlighting the laser focus on women-led development initiatives, India's Permanent Representative at the UN said on Tuesday the nation aims for Viksit Bharat by 2047, necessitating the full and equal participation of women across all spheres.

Addressing a special event organised by India on the margins of the 68th annual Commission on the Status of Women, Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said that "we envision an India where women are self-empowered".

"The government of India recognises the immense power through women's meaningful participation, shifting from women's development to women-led development," Ambassador Kamboj said as she spoke of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a fully developed India by 2047.

"We hope to ensure that women will lead the way to a developed nation as contributors, rather than passive recipients of development benefits," she added.

Presently, with 10.3 per cent of women living in extreme poverty globally, the UN was told of a multifaceted strategy being implemented in India to empower women by addressing their health safety, education, employ-

ment, and entrepreneurship.

"These initiatives aim to ensure gender justice, equality, and the full participation of women in shaping India's social, economic, political, and cultural landscape."

Citing an instance, she said that to ensure women's safety, a robust network of 759 One-Stop Centres provides integrated support and assistance, benefiting over 8.3 lakh women.

The One Stop Centre Scheme supports women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community, and at the workplace.

The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao programme, she said, targets the root causes to prevent female feticide. She added that it has resulted in an improved sex ratio at birth from 918 to 933 females per 1000 males.

Further, at 43 per cent, India boasts one of the highest proportions of women enrolled in STEM disciplines globally, she said.

Stating that women in India today are conquering the skies, she said the country has 15 per cent women pilots in civil aviation, which is significantly higher than the global average of five per cent.

In addition, patent filings by women have also increased by more than 500 times since 2014-15 and there are over 67,000 women

directors across over 55,000 startups.

The Start-Up India Stand-Up India scheme to promote entrepreneurship at the grassroots level has benefited women entrepreneurs with 10 per cent of funds reserved for women-led startups.

"So at the very least, women are not lagging... the numbers are growing every day. But we will not stop here. We have miles to go to realise the dream of a developed India. We envision an India where women are self-empowered and not dependent on anyone," Kamboj said.

India's remarks come as the UN's largest annual gathering on gender equality and women's empowerment is underway from March 11-22.

The theme of the 68th annual Commission on the Status of Women is: "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective".

According to data from 48 developing economies shared by UN Women, an additional \$360 billion is needed per year to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment across key global goals, which include ending poverty and hunger.

MCC VIOLATIONS

## DEO B'pora notifies Toll-Free No for public to register complaints



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** District Election Officer (Deputy Commissioner) Bandipora, Shakeel-ur-Rehman on Wednesday asked the political parties and contesting candidates to desist from intimidating or bribing the voters and urged them to strictly follow the Model Code of Conduct.

Through a general public notice, DEO brought to the notice of General Public, Contesting Candidates and Political parties that violation(s) of Model Code of Conduct including public intimidation, threats, influences and bribery of electors like

distribution of cash/liquor etc., are offence(s) under section 171B IPC and corrupt practices under section 123 of Representation of People Act, 1951.

The DEO informed the general public that Complaint(s), if any, in case of such violations, can be lodged with the Complaint Monitoring Cell established in office of the District Election Officer, Bandipora on Toll Free No 1950 or Complaint Monitoring Centre Mini Secretariat Bandipora on 01957-225322.

Besides, c-VIGL mobile App can also be downloaded to register such complaints through online mode.

## Election Training for Zonal, Sector Magistrates held in B'pora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** In preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, a training programme was Wednesday conducted for Zonal and Sector Magistrates of 15-Bandipora Assembly Constituency at Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The training programme was presided over by District Election Officer Shakeel ul Rehman and was attended by ARO/ACR Shabir Ahmad Wani, GM DIC, Zonal and Sector Magistrates of 15-Bandipora assembly constituency and other concerned.

The training was aimed to equip zonal and sector magistrates with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the smooth conduct of electoral processes and uphold the integrity of elections.

The zonal/sectoral Magistrates were briefed on their roles and responsibilities, emphasizing the importance of maintaining impartiality in carrying out duties for conducting peaceful and smooth elections.

emphasized proper training of zonal and sector Magistrates and asked ARO 15-Bandipora to take review from zonal and sector magistrates weekly besides directing the Zonal and Sector Magistrates to ensure assured minimum facility and all other necessary facilities at polling stations.

ARO 15-Bandipora Shabir Ahmad Wani on the occasion highlighted the role and responsibilities of zonal and sector magistrates.

He said magistrates are responsible for election management from the day of appointment till the completion of poll process and asked them to ensure effective implementation of communication plan and assured minimum facilities at each polling station including provision of ramp, drinking water, signages etc.

He also deliberated on pre-poll and poll day responsibilities of Zonal and sector magistrates.

The ARO also emphasized the importance of ethical conduct and adherence to code of conduct for electoral officials.